

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1-12. (Canceled)

13. (Currently Amended) A process for the combustion of volatile organic compounds ~~comprising including~~ the step of contacting the volatile organic compounds with oxidation catalysts comprising mixed oxides of copper, manganese and one or more rare-earth metals, wherein the metals can assume multiple valence states, having a percentage composition by weight, of 35-40% CuO, 50-60% MnO and 10-15% La₂O₃.

14. (Currently Amended) The ~~process method~~ of claim 13 ~~comprising including~~ the step of contacting the volatile organic compounds in a gaseous effluent.

15. (Currently Amended) The ~~process method~~ of claim 13 ~~comprising including~~ the step of contacting the volatile organic compounds in a gaseous effluent from chemical or printing industries.

16. (Currently Amended) The ~~process method~~ of claim 13 ~~comprising including~~ the step of contacting the volatile organic compounds present in gaseous effluents of reactors for a the solid state polycondensation of aromatic polyester resins.

17. (Currently Amended) The ~~process method~~ of claim 16 ~~comprising including~~ the step of supplying a ~~stoichiometric starchiometric~~ amount of oxygen for the combustion of the volatile organic compounds to carbon dioxide and water.

18. (Currently Amended) A process ~~for of~~ the combustion of hydrocarbons in the burner of thermal power stations for generating electricity ~~comprising including~~ the step of contacting the hydrocarbons with oxidation catalysts comprising mixed oxides of copper, manganese and one or more rare-earth metals, wherein the metals can assume multiple valence states, having a percentage composition by weight, ~~expressed as of 35-40% CuO, 50-60% MnO and 10-15% La₂O₃ are earth oxides~~ (in which the metal has the lowest valence) of, respectively, 8-50%, 10-75% and 2-15%.